



Lung Cancer Screening *Frequently Asked Questions*

Who should have a Lung Cancer Screening (LCS) using Computed Tomography (CT)?

The United States Preventative Services Task Force (USPSTF) recommends LCS using CT for the following risk group:

- **55-80 years of age, AND**
- **Cigarette Smoking history of 30 pack years (e.g. equivalent of 1 pack per day for 30 years or 2 packs a day for 15 years)**
 - **Includes former cigarette smokers who have quit smoking within the last 15 years**

How do I schedule a Lung Cancer Screening exam using CT?

Speak to your primary care physician to see if you qualify for LCS CT. All patients require a physician order.

How is a Lung Cancer Screening CT scan different from other chest CT scans?

The LCS scan reduces the radiation dose to the patient by only scanning the area of the lungs. A normal chest CT scan uses a higher dose to see additional structures such as the heart and mediastinum, which are more difficult to see using low dose techniques. The dose used in a LCS CT is similar to that seen in screening mammograms.

How can I find out if my insurance will pay for the test?

Call the number on the back of your health insurance card and ask a representative about your coverage.

What state of health should I be in to have my test?

You should be in your best usual state of health. This may include a long-standing cough or shortness of breath due to smoking. The test should not be performed when you have new symptoms, such as fever, chest pain, a new or changing cough, shortness of breath that you have never felt before, coughing up blood, or unexplained weight loss.

How is the exam performed?

No special preparation is required. You can eat before and after the exam. You may wear most street clothes without metal over your chest. The test itself is performed in less than a minute. You will be asked to hold your breath briefly.

What are the risks from CT lung screening?

Radiation can increase a person's risk of cancer 20 or more years later. No test, including lung cancer screening CT, is perfect. Important medical conditions, including lung cancer may go undetected. Twenty five to 30 percent of the time, findings may require additional imaging or evaluation. Small lung nodules are very common, and more than 97 percent are not cancer although they can cause anxiety. Repeating the examination in 3 months is the most frequent follow-up exam to track nodules. Occasionally, patients need a procedure such as a biopsy that will only be performed with your informed consent.

What else might be found on the CT scan?

Areas of your body next to your lungs are partially imaged. In a small percentage of cases (5 to 10 percent), the CT scan will show an abnormal finding in one of these areas, such as your kidneys, adrenal glands, liver or thyroid. Your healthcare provider who ordered your exam can help determine what, if any, additional testing you may need.

Who will receive the results?

Your healthcare provider who ordered your exam will receive a copy of your results. You can sign up for Patient Gateway to view the results directly.

What are the benefits of Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital’s lung cancer screening program?

Brigham and Women’s Faulkner Hospital’s Lung Cancer Screening program is approved by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health Radiation Control Program as a “healing arts screening program.” Additionally, the American College of Radiology recognizes our site as a “designated Lung Cancer Screening Center.” These designations assure our patients that they will receive the very best quality care while minimizing the radiation dose.

Where can I find more information about Lung Cancer Screening?

- Visit our website at www.brighamandwomensfaulkner.org
- Smoking cessation materials are available in BWFH’s Patient-Family Resource Center.
- Please call 617-278-0810 or email BWHLungCancerScreening@partners.org if you would like to self-refer.
- For additional information, please contact Dr. Francine Jacobson, Director of Lung Cancer Screening, at fjacobson@partners.org or 617-732-6286.

The best way to prevent lung cancer is to stop smoking. Call your primary physician for questions and appointment options. Along with your physician we can help!

Understand your Risk of Lung Cancer

The number of cigarettes you have smoked in your lifetime is described in “pack-years.” If you smoke 1 pack of cigarettes (20 cigarettes) every day for 1 year, you have smoked 1 pack-year. You may not always smoke exactly the same number of cigarettes every day but using average estimates, you can understand how much you have smoked in pack-years.

Average # of Cigarettes per day in a year	=	Pack-year	“X” (Multiply by)	Enter Number of years	=	Pack-years (Total at bottom)
5	=	0.25	X		=	
10	=	0.50	X		=	
20	=	1.0	X		=	
30	=	1.5	X		=	
40	=	2	X		=	
60	=	3	X		=	
Total Pack Years						